

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE
Kansas
COUNTY
Leavenworth
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE

1. NAME			
COMMON NAME			
AND/OR HISTORIC NAME			
Harris, Sen. William A., House			
2. LOCATION			
STREET AND NUMBER			
One-fourth mile west of Linwood on K-32 (SE 1/4, Sec. 14, T 12 S, R 21 E)			
CITY OR TOWN		CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT	
Linwood		no. 2, Bill Roy	
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
Kansas	66052	Leavenworth	103

3. CLASSIFICATION					
CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC		
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input type="checkbox"/> Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)					
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)	<input type="checkbox"/> Comments	

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY			
OWNER'S NAME			
Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Lavin			
STREET AND NUMBER			
Route #1			
CITY OR TOWN	STATE	CODE	
Linwood	Kansas	66052	20

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION			
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.			
Register of Deeds			
STREET AND NUMBER			
Leavenworth County Courthouse			
CITY OR TOWN	STATE	CODE	
Leavenworth	Kansas	20	

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS			
TITLE OF SURVEY			
Historic Sites Survey			
DATE OF SURVEY: June 1, 1973 <input type="checkbox"/> Federal <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State <input type="checkbox"/> County <input type="checkbox"/> Local			
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS			
Kansas State Historical Society			
STREET AND NUMBER			
120 West Tenth Street			
CITY OR TOWN	STATE	CODE	
Topeka	Kansas	20	

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE	Kansas
COUNTY	Franklin
ENTRY NUMBER	
DATE	

FOR NPS USE ONLY

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The William A. Harris house, which faces east, is a two-story rectangular building with a basement, an attic and a two-story ell extending to the west.

The exterior walls rest on a raised base made of rough hewn limestone. The house includes two large porches, the main entry porch on the east and another which wraps around the west and south sides of the ell. There is also a large bay window on the south side.

The roof form is a truncated hip terminating in a flat center portion. There are numerous dormers with windows which provide light to the attic. Ornamental brick chimneys with decorative caps enhance the roof line. The roof is separated from the walls by a cornice with wide-spaced simple brackets. Red asbestos shingles are the basic roofing material although the dormers are covered with standing seam metal roofs. The flat-roofed front porch is accented by a pediment directly over the steps. A pediment also occurs in the main roof line above the front entrance.

The windows on all floors are tall slender rectangles. The gray-painted trim is plain and simple. The large porches are supported by columns with decorative brackets.

The first floor had four large rooms plus the kitchen and pantry to the rear. The second floor had four bedrooms and two rooms over the kitchen for the servants' quarters. The attic floor was completely finished but without partitions. The front part of the house on the two main floors was divided by a wide hall from front to back. Fireplaces, which were decorated with artistically designed ceramic tile, were placed in each of the main rooms in such a manner that only one chimney was needed on each side of the house. The woodwork and floors were of the highest quality southern white pine but later occupants added oak flooring to the first floor. The full basement included an area set aside as a wine cellar.

The exterior of the house remains basically the same as the original, except that shutters have been added and apparently two small frame additions, one on the north side and the other on the west end closing in part of the porch. The present owners are in the process of restoring the building.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

☐ Pre-Columbian☐ 16th Century☐ 18th Century☐ 20th Century☐ 15th Century☐ 17th Century☒ 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

1883

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

☐ Aboriginal☐ Education☒ Political☐ Urban Planning☐ Pre-historic☐ Engineering☐ Religion-Phi-☐ Other (Specify)☐ Historic☐ Industry

osophy

☒ Agriculture☐ Invention☐ Science☒ Architecture☐ Landscape☐ Sculpture☐ Art

Architecture

☐ Social/Human-☐ Commerce☐ Literature

itarian

☐ Communications☐ Military☐ Theater☐ Conservation☐ Music☐ Transportation

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The William A. Harris house near Linwood was erected in 1883 for the man regarded as the United States' foremost authority on Shorthorn cattle breeding.

William Alexander Harris was born in Virginia October 29, 1841, graduated from Columbian College in 1859 and Virginia Military Institute in 1861, and then served in the Confederate army as assistant adjutant-general of Wilcox's brigade, Longstreet's division, and later as ordnance officer of D. H. Hill's division. After the war he came to Kansas and was employed as a civil engineer in construction of the Union Pacific railroad from Leavenworth to Lawrence and then as resident engineer until the road was completed west to the Colorado line in 1868. In 1868 he was appointed land agent for the sale of lands acquired by the railroads from the Delawares and other Indian tribes. While acting in that capacity until 1884, he made his home in Lawrence.

In 1876 he began raising Shorthorn cattle on former Indian lands which he had earlier acquired in southwestern Leavenworth county. At that time the Shorthorn breed was at a low point in the United States because of a belief that only red-color bulls could produce desirable purebred calves. White and red-and-white bulls of high quality went to common herds for moderate prices, while purebred breeders acquired the much more expensive but often inferior red bulls. The Shorthorn breed had accordingly declined and ranked below the Angus and Hereford in the show ring, the market and in stockmen's opinions.

Harris, instead of following the same unsuccessful pattern, disregarded the color fad and acquired a red-and-white bull of good quality. His belief was that a pedigree didn't mean anything unless the animal itself was of high quality. His goal was to restore the Shorthorn's reputation as a beef producer. He later imported a Scotch Shorthorn bull, Baron Victor, and the resulting calf crops established the fame of his herd. Cattle of such merit were produced that Linwood became the Mecca for Shorthorn breeders in America. Harris' herd furnished the sires of Shorthorn calves that restored the breed's fame.

In 1883 Harris began the construction of a large frame house on a bluff overlooking his barns, pasture and orchard to the south. The Linwood Leader on December 27, 1883, described it as a "... palatial residence, grand and beautiful, and supplied with all the conveniences that this age of improvement affords, necessary to make it pleasant and comfortable, and to enlighten the laborers of household duties."

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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(Continuation Sheet)

STATE Kansas	
COUNTY Leavenworth	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Number all entries)

8.

Harris' fame as a Shorthorn breeder made his name a household word in Kansas. Politically he had been a Democrat until 1890 when he identified with the Populist party. In 1892 he was elected as Congressman-at-large from Kansas. Defeated in a re-election attempt in 1894, he was elected to the state senate in 1896. And in January, 1897, he was selected by the legislature to be the state's junior U. S. Senator. For a former Confederate officer, this was a most remarkable accomplishment in Kansas, a state at that time dominated politically by Union veterans. It was said by some that his selection indicated the "bloody shirt" had finally been buried in Kansas.

His increasing involvement in politics forced him to spend less and less time with his Shorthorn herd at Linwood. Through his personal attention the herd had been brought to a high state of perfection, but without his oversight, the high quality could not be maintained. Consequently he decided to dispose of his herd in 1896.

After his term in the U. S. Senate ended, he was employed by the National Livestock Association in Chicago but maintained his home in Lawrence. (The Linwood farm had been sold in 1901.) In 1906 he was the Democratic candidate for governor of Kansas and was defeated by only 2,000 votes. He died in Chicago in December, 1909, and was returned to Lawrence for burial.

Sen. William A. Harris was one of the most remarkable political figures of late 19th century Kansas. But it was his accomplishments in the field of Shorthorn breeding which brought him a greater renown.

9.

Kansas City Times, December 21, 1909.

Laude, G. A., Kansas Shorthorn: A History of the Breed in the State - 1857-1920 (Iola, Kansas: Laude Printing Company, 1920), pp. 52, 53, 62-69, 164, 165.

Linwood Leader, December 27, 1883.

McC Campbell, C. W., "Col. W. A. Harris," 41st Annual Livestock Feeder's Day, 1953-54 Progress Reports (Kansas Agricultural Experiment Station, Kansas State College, Manhattan, May 1, 1954, Circular 308.)

Malone, Dumas, Dictionary of American Biography, Vol. VIII (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1932), pp. 326, 327.

Portrait and Biographical Record of Leavenworth, Douglas and Franklin Counties (Chicago: Chapman Publishing Co., 1899), pp. 213-215.

Reno, W. W., and Hopkins, R. J., editors, The Kansas Blue Book, 1897 (Topeka: Crane and Company, 1897), p. 18.

Walters, Dr. J. D., "Regent W. A. Harris Dead," The Industrialist, vol. 36, No. 11 (January 8, 1910), pp. 163-165.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Fitch, Clyde Leon, William A. Harris: His Economic Interests, (Unpublished M.S. thesis, Kansas State Teacher's College, Emporia, Kansas, 1967).
- Harris, Col. William A., "Pioneers in Kansas Agriculture," 33rd Biennial Report of the Kansas State Board of Agriculture (Topeka: Kansas State Printing Plant, 1943), pp. 134-138.
- Harris, Col. W. A., "What Shall We Breed?", Quarterly Report of the Kansas State Board of Agriculture (Topeka: Kansas Publishing House, 1885), pp. 26-29.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY				LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES			
CORNER	LATITUDE			LONGITUDE			
	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	
NW	0			95	02	36	
NE	0						
SE	0			39	00	15	
SW	0						

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 5

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Richard D. Pankratz, Director, Historic Sites Survey	
ORGANIZATION: Kansas State Historical Society	DATE: May 1, 1974
STREET AND NUMBER: 120 West Tenth Street	
CITY OR TOWN: Topeka	STATE: Kansas 66612
	CODE: 20

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National ☒ State ☒ Local ☐

Name _____

Nyle H. Miller

Title Executive Director, Kansas
State Historical Society

Date August 1, 1974

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date _____

ATTEST:

Keeper of The National Register

Date _____

SEE INSTRUCTIONS